

Vicard discloses storing a signature of a correct chip-key in the register 25 shown in Fig. 1 (see Vicard, col. 4, lines 62-66). Vicard then discloses inputting an external chip-key and decrypting the externally input chip-key at the secure communications module 20, such that a first intermediate chip-key output IV1 is sent to the one-way hash function module 26 to be hashed. The intermediate hashed chip-key IV2 is then compared to the stored signature of a correct chip-key at the comparator 27. Vicard only discloses storing a signature of a correct chip-key. In the “Response to Amendment” section of the current Action, the Examiner asserts that the stored signature of Vicard discloses the security release key recited in claim 1. While, applicant respectfully disagrees (the stored signature is not the same as or a recognized equivalent to the stored release key of claim 1), even if the stored signature were equivalent to the stored release key of claim 1, which it is not, Vicard would then fail to disclose or suggest storing the security registration lock in a nonvolatile storage, as recited in claim 1. Vicard only discloses storing one element, the signature.

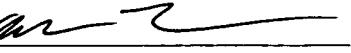
Consequently, regardless of which element (a key or a lock) is stored in Vicard, the other element is not stored. Accordingly, claim 1, which discloses storing both a key and a lock, is allowable. Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and are allowable due at least to their respective dependencies.

Applicant solicits an early action allowing the claims.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief, including extensions of time, and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing Attorney Docket No. **299002053200**.

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